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FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH IN PICTURES

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NO. 51

WILD-LOOKING JOSHUA TREE  
NEAR RELATIVE OF LILIES



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1928

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY  
U. S. FOREST SERVICE  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

This Joshua tree, an inhabitant of the Mojave desert and vicinity and sometimes known as the "Ghost Tree" is botanically related to the lilies. In the spring it bears flowers like those of the lily family, but here its outward resemblance to the more familiar lilies seems to end. The keen, bayonet-like leaves bristling at the ends of the big clumsy branches serve to keep many natural enemies at a distance. The tree sends roots far into the earth in search of moisture and grows very slowly, reaching a height of only 40 feet in the 200 or more years of its life. The tough wood is sliced thin and used for surgeons' splints. Collars of Joshua wood are put about the base of young California fruit trees to baffle rodents.

*Photograph by U. S. Forest Service*





